

(Flag Day 2009 Address English & Samoan)

2009 Flag Day Address
Governor Togiola Tulafono
April 17, 2009
Veterans Memorial Stadium - Tafuna, American Samoa

Greetings and Talofa.

Flag Day celebrations are not new. Each Flag Day is an opportunity to reflect on another year of government. We count and assess the many ways in which we were blessed. And I ask you, fellow American Samoans, not to forget any of God's wonderful blessings.

I want to pay a special tribute to our special guests: the Honorable Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa; Her Royal Highness Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu Tuita of the Kingdom of Tonga; the Honorable Foua Toloa and Mrs. Fesola'i Logo Faletose Toloa; the Honorable Jim Marurai, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands; the Honorable Pokotoa Sipela, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries, Post & Telecommunications, and Administrative Services of the Government of Niue; the Honorable Caroline Bilkey, High Commissioner of New Zealand to Samoa; Lady Ala'ile'ula Tuku'aho of Tonga, Rear Admiral Eric Broderick of the United States Public Health Service, and Acting Administrator of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Colonel Joseph Lance, Commanding Officer of the 12th Marine Corps District, Western Recruiting Region, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego CA; and the US Marine Corps Band from Camp Smith, Hawaii; Colonel Clifton Takenaka, 9th Mission Support Command, Fort Shafter, Hawaii; and Lieutenant Commander Jason Neubauer, US Coast Guard, Hawaii. Welcome to American Samoa, and thank you for honoring us with your presence in these festivities.

Flag Day each year is also an opportunity to review our form and manner of governance. We measure how far we have traveled in the past year, and check to see if we are heading in the right direction. It is a traditional exercise that started since our government was founded in 1900.

On Flag Day we thank all those who serve in the ranks of public service – traditional leaders, legislators, judges, cabinet members, and every public servant. Thank you for your services.

Another Flag Day tradition is a word of appreciation to the government of the United States of America, the President, the Congress, the Department of the Interior, and all the federal agencies, for the generous support and contributions to the development of our Territory. Thank you very much.

I said, it is the day when we assess our progress, review our goals as a government and our hopes as a people. You and I continue to witness improvements in our government efforts to upgrade

our schools and health care services, improve roads, electric and water services, expand our public safety, and upgrade the skills training of our public servants.

We stand at the threshold of a new wave of economic development with the arrival of fiber optic services, and we are hard at work preparing to cope with additional needs in power and water supply, roads, schools, hospital, public safety and all other government services.

Progress and development has many costs – the most serious being in social changes. And the American Samoa Government (ASG) is rising to meet the challenge of new attitudes about family – the rising youth problems, and disturbances in the homes.

I spoke on these matters in my inauguration remarks in January, and I remind you, again, that they are real. President Obama recognized the same in his inaugural speech.

The hustle and bustle of development activities, however, should not lead us to forget that which remains unsettled — the search for a permanent political status — one where we may continue to exercise freedom to the fullest, enjoy all human rights, and which will allow the preservation of our culture and traditions, and the continued pursuit of happiness on our own terms.

Two years ago, the Future Political Status Study Commission submitted its report to the Fono, as the law required. I am assuming the Legislature is planning to employ the upcoming constitutional convention as a forum for discussing the report and its implications. That is fine with me.

As we await that event, let me briefly point out the major questions that need to be thoroughly considered by us all:

1 Shall we continue as a Territory of the United States? Or should we seek, or fashion, a new status, as other territories once administered by the US have done?

Time and again, the US Congress has indicated it is willing and prepared to consider with us a permanent status – whenever we are ready. I think that time is here, or it is fast approaching. Indecisiveness can only lead to confusion and insecurity. This is no time to procrastinate.

On Monday this week, President Obama spoke with feeling about the nation's economy, and reminded us of the story Jesus once told about a man who built his house on a rock. Storms came and failed to destroy it. The house built on sand was blown away. Let us find that rock now. Waves and storms have no mercy. They wait for no one.

Take note also of the cries of the modern generations. Continue to disregard them, and cries will become roars.

2 Let us also face the question of American Samoa citizenship. I believe we have a right to determine who shall be American Samoan citizens, and to establish conditions for extending that

status to others. And then we need to fashion and structure its relation to the citizenship of the US. After all, many of our people, both here and abroad, have become US citizens.

3 Every time these issues are raised, concerns about sources of funding are always the first reaction. Does this mean we are going to give up US financial assistance? Can we manage without it? Do we have the knowledge and toughness to be on our own?

Those questions go to the heart of the issue. We will never have the answers if we do not begin the process.

4 There is the immovable rock – our culture: Our Land. How will it be affected by this political status search? Our culture has been the target of many criticisms recently, most by our own people whose knowledge and appreciation are incomplete. Let me say to you now. Our Fa'asamoa is not an antique, nor is it just a 'stage culture' displayed and performed only for tourists. Our culture is a living culture. It is our way of life. To seek to change it is to attempt a change in our systems of *mataiship*, land tenure, and social interaction. There is not a person alive today who is smart enough to do that.

5 The duality of democracy and our traditions – as basis for our governance has so far worked. Voices are heard calling for full democracy in our Legislature by electing the Senate, and giving the power to veto override. Well, the question of veto override was decided in the recent election. Supporters of the override continue to argue there was not sufficient public education.

6 It has been 32 years since we elected our governor. How do we feel about the granting of authority to our local leaders? I, for one, am not concerned about ability to govern. There is a growing pool of young educated Samoans. They will rise to the occasion. But, this is still a part of the overall permanent political status that we must consider.

These and other questions, I believe, will come before the constitutional reviewers late this year. There is a need for a realistic program of public education, for it is one thing to hear about them all the time, it is something else when you ponder them deeply and move to decide. It may be that the convention will want to set up a permanent office or agency for an extended consideration of a status. That is fine. Bear in mind, a journey of a thousand miles must begin with the first step. Let's take that step now.

The Fono has the power to establish a permanent office for status work, research, contacts with federal agencies, and develop a framework for public education.

Our Constitution surely needs a review. The present document was approved in 1967 with a provision for a 5-year review. It has now been 42 years. There have been two conventions, but their work failed approval for one reason or another. Let's try to make sure this new review will fare better.

Look at the facts:

- In 1967, population of American Samoa was less than 40,000. Today, it is about 69,000.
- ASG had an annual budget of less than \$100 million. This year, the budget is over \$300 million.
- In 1967, we had only two high schools and no community college.
- There were no long lines of new cars on the roads, and only a few families had *palagi* houses.
- At the passage of this constitution, only a handful of families had TV sets in their homes. Computer, internet and email were not in our language.

My final thoughts on the issue of status, concerns our fellow Samoans from Upolu and Savai'i. Statistics show that almost half of the American Samoa population today was born in Samoa. Many have been here all their lives – married to us, serving our *aiga*, churches and government. The numbers keep growing as we continue on the path of modern economic development.

I raise this question with the utmost care, for I am aware of local feelings on this issue. In addition, we have residents from other nations who have become permanent residents through marriage. But, the case of Samoa is different -- For we are one in heart, one in spirit, one in blood.

That's my Flag Day address for this year. I ask every American Samoan to ponder the questions I have raised today. Ask for Divine Guidance as we maneuver our way through these difficult times.

Continue your prayers for our sons and daughters in the military services of our country, especially those deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the close of these celebrations, Lieutenant Governor Faoa Sunia will speak to convey our thanks to all those who contributed to the preparation of Flag Day this year.

Let me just say a word of congratulations to our Flag Day 2009 Committee – to Chairman - Secretary of Samoan Affairs High Chief Tufele Li'a, all the departments of our government, our Army Reserve, our churches, our schools, our community organizations, and our private sector – Thank you very much for all the great work that you continue to do for American Samoa and our annual Flag Day celebration.

Fa'afetai. Soifua.

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**Saunoaga o le Fu'a 2009
Kovana Togiola Tulafono**

**Aperila 17, 2009 - 'A'ai o Ta'aloga a Fitafita Tuai
Tafuna, Amerika Samoa**

Talofa Tutuila ma Manu'a.

Talofa i le mamalu ma le pa'ia o malo vala'aulia, ma le atunu'u ua potopoto. Ou te fa'atalofa atu. Ua fetalai le Fofoga o le Aso e paepae upu o le taeao. Taeao manua. Taeao toto'a. Taeao manino.

Ua I lagi le inatisa e pei ona si'itaulaga le ositaulaga o le aso – Le Afioga Moseniolo Etuale Lealofi. E le fa'aitiitia ai le fa'amanu, le fa'afetai, ma le fifiafia e ao ina taulagi pea – mai ia te a'u le ta'ita'i, fa'apea tupu ma e'e ma e o nofopule i tulaga ese'ese o lo ta Malo.

E le fou le Sisigafu'a ia Tutuila ma Manu'a. A o aso uma fa'apenei, tatou te potopoto ai e molimau i fa'aaliga va'aia o le fou pea o fa'amanuiaga a le Atua i si o tatou atunu'u, mai le tasi Sisisgafu'a i le isi. E moni lava e molimau le tasi taeao i le tasi taeao, ma le tasi aso i le tasi aso. Ua tatou se'ei pea i maota o manu ma 'oa'oa i Lana fa'asoa alofa. O le mea lea, le atunu'u e, 'aua lava ne'i galo se mea e tasi o Ana meaalofa, pe fa'aitiitia lau fa'amanu.

Fa'afetai i le pa'ia maualuga o le 'auvala'aulia ua afifio mai e fa'amalumalu lo tatou aso fa'apitoa – le Afioga i le Ali'i Palemia o le Malo o Samoa Tuto'atasi – Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, le Afioga i le Purinise o Tonga Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu Tuita, le Afioga i le Ulu o Tokelau Foua Toloa ma le faletua ia Fesola'i Logo Faletese Toloa, le Afioga i le Ali'i Palemia o le Malo o le Atu Kuki Jim Marurai, le Afioga i le Ali'i Minisita o Fa'ato'aga, Vaomatua, Faiga Faiva, Falemeli ma Feso'ota'iga o le Malo o Niue Pokotoa Sipela, le Afioga i le Hai Komesina o Niu Sila i Samoa Caroline Bilkey, le Afioga ia Lady Ala'ile'ula Tuku'aho o Tonga, ma sui maualuluga o vaega'au a le Unaite Setete – le Ami (Army), le Coast Guard, le Malini (Marines), le Neivi (Navy), le fa'aili pu ta'uta'ua a le Malini – le Marine Pacific Forces Band, ma la tatou lava fa'aili pu ta'uta'ua mai Samoa – le fa'aili a Leoleo, le Royal Samoa Police Band, ma le aufa'afifafia mai Samoa i le Afio'aga o Falelauvao ma le Afio'aga o Satitoa. Fa'afetai le fa'aloalo, fa'afetai le fa'aea, fa'afetai le fia fai uso ia Amerika Samoa. Fa'afetai tele lava.

O le aso lenei e taula'i ai finagalo i mataupu tau lo tatou Malo, tatou te manatunatu ai i la tatou folauga, e toe sasa'a ai le fafao ma timata le upega, e mata'i ai le launiu i ulula, ma le alava'a po o taumuatonu lo ta sa. O le aso e lalaga ai manatu ma fuafua le lumana'i, ina ia tumau pea le soifua solo lelei o le atunu'u.

E le o mapu lou fa'afogaga pea i fa'asalalauga e uiga i le atina'e o le tamaoaiga, le fa'aleleia o a'oga, falema'i, ala tetele, eletise ma le vai taumafa, aemaise le puipuiga o le saogalemu lautele. Tele tapenaga e mo'omia ina ia ofi fimalie mai ma nofo lelei i le atunu'u le atina'e fou o le tamaoaiga, e ala i le faipa opetika (fiber optic). Ona o le a fa'aopoopo tagata ma galuega fou, e ao ai ina fa'aleleia atili alatele, tapena fale ma nofoaga, o le uila ma le vai, sauna a'oga ma le tausiga o le soifua maloloina, ma nofo sauni pisinisi a le atunu'u e tautua ai lenei atina'e tele.

Ua tula'i fo'i lou Malo e tali atu fa'afitau fou o lo tatou soifuaga suia, aemaise le fia lavea'iina o tupulaga talavou mai amioga fa'ati'otala a fili o ona po nei. Aua o tupulaga na o lo tatou fa'amoemoe mo le lumana'I manuia.

O se vaitau tumu i tapenaga lea ua tatou o'o mai i ai. Aepeita'i, e le fa'agalo ai pe fa'atuatuna'i i le misiona taua a le Malo – fa'amautu tulaga e atoatoa ai le puipuia o le sa'olotoga ma aia tatau, ma avatu ai i tagatanu'u uma le tautua mo'omia i le taimi nei, ma le lumana'i.

O le lua lenei o tausaga talu ona taliu mai i fanua le va'asa'ili o Tutuila ma Manu'a, le Komisi Su'esu'e Tulaga fa'aMalo mo le Lumana'i, ma fola i luma o le Fono Faitulafono ma tatou uma lana lipoti. Ua ta'oto atu i le a'ai o finagalo ana fautuaga. O lo'o tatou tali tali malie la se finagalo o le Fono e tusa ma ia sa'iliga. A e fa'apea la'u faitau, atonu o lo'o i ai le finagalo o le Fono e talia le Fono Iloilo Fa'avae, e lalafo ai le atunu'u. A o tatou sauna atu la i le iloiloga, se'i o'u toe fa'amatogi atu vala taua o lo tatou tulaga fa'aMalo, e tapena i ai tofa loloto ma le fa'autaga mamaao:

1 O le fesili e tumua: Tatou te tumau ea i le fa'ateritori, e pei ona tatou i ai nei, i lalo o le fa'amalu o le Malo tele? Pe tatou te sa'ili atu e pei ona sa'ili isi fo'i Teritori sa pulea e le Unaite Setete? O lea lava tatou te nonofo ma folafolaga a le Konekeresi ma le Malo Tele, so'o se taimi e mautu ai sa tatou filifiliga, fa'atulaga loa se feutaga'iga. O lo'u aofifi, ua o'o i le taimi, e fulifuli fa'ala'au mamafa, liuliu toto'a ai le tofa i se tulaga fa'aMalo mautu. O la'u fautuaga: Aua tatou te nofoa'i. E le taliolaina tulaga ma tofi o le atunu'u. E le fa'atali fo'i galu fafati ma le tai fana'e o suiga se'i o ta malilie. Fa'afogofa fo'I I le alaga a tupulaga o aso nei -- fai se tulaga fa'aMalo mautu.

2 Tu'u ane fo'i lau tofa sa'ili i le fesili i le sitiseni o Amerika Samoa. O le a ea sona tulaga, malosi fa'alekulafono, ma ni aiaiga e ogatasi ma o ta lagona? E le o tatou ea e i ai le aia tatau e fa'asino ai po o ai e avea ma sitiseni o Tutuila ma Manu'a? O le a la le tu'ufa'afeagai ma le sitiseni o le Unaite Setete?

3 E le tau fa'aleoina, pe fa'a'ofu fo'i ni upu, le popolega malosi i taimi uma e lalaga ai nei mataupu. O le fesili muamua a le to'atele: E afaina ai tupe mai le Malo Tele ia e maua mai tausaga uma e fai ai le Malo o Amerika Samoa? E lava le malosi o lou tamaoaiga e fa'atino ail au pule ia te oe lava? Ua e agava'a?

4 O le a lava le tulaga ta te 'ausi i ai, e le tu'umamaina le puipuiga o la ta aganu'u. Tele le faitioina o la ta aganu'u i aso nei. E fa'apogai i le le atoatoa o le malamalamalama, ma isi uiiga ua fa'atino i luga o le igoa o le aganu'u. O la ta fa'aSamoa e le o se aganu'u o teu ma fa'aaliali i pusa tioata o ni fale mata'aga. Leai. O le aganu'u o lo'o ola, ma o lo'o ta soifua ai. E leai fo'i se poto po o se vave e mafia ona ia faia ni suiga e aunoa ma le talepe ai o le soifuaga fealoa'i masani. A mulu le aganu'u, ua tautalagia le tulaga o matai, ele'ele, gagana Samoa, ma measina.

5 O le a sou lagona i le se'elua o le fa'atemokarasi ma pule'aga e aloa'ia tulaga o le aganu'u, pei ona i ai nei? Alalaga le to'atele ia fa'a'atoa le fa'atemokarasi e ala I le palotaina o le Maota maualuga, ma le vito i 'a'ao o le Fono. Na ta'u i le palotaga o le tausaga ua mavae le finagalo o le atunu'u i le vito. A e toe fa'atata tua'upega le faitioga a le to'atele – fai mai e le'i malamalamalama.

6 Ua siili le 30 tausaga talu ona palota lo ta kovana. O le a sau fa' alagona ina ua fa' amatu'u mai i ou a'ao ma o ta lima lena vaega o le pule'aga o lo ta'ua lava Malo? Lea ua mulu 'au o foe e au lava tama fanau. Ua mafa tautai fo'i lo ta sa i le poto ma le atamai ua foa'i e le Atua i ou lava tagata.

O ni isi na o fesili, ma isi fo'i e le o fa' aleoina nei, e ono folasia i lumamea pe a iloilo le Fa'avae. E mo'omia se galuega tele e fa' amanino ma fa' apupula le lavelave o nei mataupu. Aua e ese le taia pea i le fa' afogofoga, ese le nofo i lalo e va'ili. E le tasi fo'i se iloiloga, pe tasi se tausaga. E le se filifiliga pu'upu'u. O le malaga o maila e afe, e amata i le la'a e tasi. Amata loa. E mafia i le malosi o le Fono Faitulafono ona fa'avae so ta ofisa e iloiloina mae'ae'a, tu'ufa'atasi lipoti uma, tapena feutaga'iga ma le Malo Tele, ma fa'atulaga polokalama o ni a'oa'oga mo le lautele, ina ia filifili ma le manino le lautele.

O novema i le tausaga nei lea ua atofa mo la iloiloga fa'avae. O le 1967 na pasia ai le Fa'avae lea tatou te soifua ai. Ua 42 tausaga. O le aiaiga – ia toe Iloilo i totonu o le lima mai le 1967. Ua fa'aluua ona iloilo e le pasia i'uga a le 'au Iloilo. 'Aua ne'i tatou tiu ai. Silasila. Na pasia le fa'avae lenei:

-Sa le atoa le 40,000 le faitau aofa'i o lou Teritori; i le 2009, ua ova ma le 69,000 tagata i Amerika Samoa.

-Sa le atoa se \$100 miliona le tupe fa'asoasoa a le Malo i le 1967; i le 2009, ua ova ma le \$300 miliona.

-E le i ai lo a Kolisi Tu'ufa'atasi; na o a'oga maualuga e 2.

-E le i ai ni laina u'umi o ta'avale tioata fou i le alatele, ma ni o tatou fale papalagi ta'i fogafale lua.

Na pasia le fa'avae e le i tofu le aiga ma le TV, ma e le i maua i la tatou gagana le komepiuta, initaneti, ma le imeli.

Ioe, e le toe 'alofia le mea ua o'o i lona taimi – toe afua le taeao o lo ta Fa'avae.

O la'u toe upu i le mataupu nei, ia afea o tatou uso mai Samoa i Sisifo o lo'o tatou mafuta, i lou finagalo fuafua. O lo'o alalaga fo'i latou i se faiga mautu e aloa'ia ai lo latou nopia'i ma tautua aiga, tautua lotu, ma tautua malo i o ta ele'ele. E le namalelaina le upu moni, i le taimi nei, ua aga'i atu ina tutusa lo tatou faitau aofa'i – o e na soifua i Samoa, ma tatou na soifua i Tutuila ma Manu'a. E le aga'i fo'i ina fa'aitiitia, ae fa'aopoopo pea, aua o lo'o tatou fa'alagolago malosi ia i latou i le atina'e o le tamaoaiga.

E laga ma le fa'aeteete le mataupu nei, ona e i ai fo'i uso mai isi atunu'u ua usugafa fo'i ma mautu i Tutuila ma Manu'a. A e ao lava ina manino pea, o Upolu ma Savai'i, Tutuila ma Manu'a. o le atunu'u e tasi. Tasi le lanu. Tasi le gagana. Tasi le tupu'aga.

O a'u upu na o lenei Sisigafu'a. Le atunu'u e, mai ou tumutumu mauga e o'o i le lautele, tatou o e laga le tofa ma le fa'autaga o lo'o 'au'afa i maota ma laoa. Tatou o e vala'au i le Papa Fa'avae o lo tatou Fa'atuatuaga. O Ia e fa'aali mai.

Afai e mae'a sauniga ma fa'afiafiaga, a tu'u ifo le Tagavai i lenei tausaga, tatala le filiali'i ma tu'uama le fua – ia soifua i le lagi e mama Tutuila ma Manu'a, folau atu i lagi e lelei le mamalu o le 'auvala'aulia.

Soifua.

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